

MINUTES OF THE JULY 21, 2014 ARLINGTON BOARD OF ASSESSORS' MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kevin Feeley at 6:02 p.m.

Present were Robert Greeley, Mary Winstanley O'Connor and the Chair, Kevin Feeley.

There were several members in the audience, certain of whom were taping the proceedings.

The Board reviewed the minutes from the July 9, 2014 meeting and a motion was made by Mary Winstanley O'Connor and seconded by Robert Greeley to approve the minutes. The motion was voted unanimously.

Old Business

Chairman Feeley informed the Board that the Board had received a communication from the Massachusetts Appellate Tax Board on the RCN litigation. Specifically, the status hearing was rescheduled from September 16th to September 22, 2014. This suit involves the appeal of the Board's action on abatement applications for years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

New Business

It was requested that a hearing be scheduled for August 4, 2014. The Office Manager will be instructed to notify the two taxpayers, who requested hearings with respect to their respective filings that hearings will be scheduled for August 4, 2014. Steven Harrington, a resident from Columbia Road, asked to speak to the Board and his request was granted. He spoke about his dissatisfaction with receiving only a partial abatement the first time he applied for an abatement and stated that he did not receive an abatement the second time he filed for an abatement. He then spoke about the fact that one of the three candidates being interviewed was a "developer" in town and he did not like that fact and thought it was inappropriate.

Correspondence

Chairman Feeley informed the Board that Joan Roman sent a communication concerning the new website and the scheduling of trainings for employees. All employees will receive training.

Interview of Candidates

The interviews for the three candidates selected by the Screening Committee for the position of the Director of Assessments began at 6:30 p.m. Chairman Feeley reported that the Screening Committee consisted of himself, Caryn Cove Malloy, Human Resources Director, Andrew Flanagan, the Deputy Town Manager and Stephen Gilligan, the Town Treasurer.

The first interview was James F. Doherty, which began at 6:30 p.m. The Board asked Mr. Doherty a number of questions concerning his experience, his training, relationship with the Department of Revenue, his willingness and ability to minimize expenses for the Town of Arlington by representing the Board of Assessors at Appellate Tax Board hearings and performing a significant portion of the valuation work in the office, as opposed to retaining an outside consultant for assistant in years that were not revaluation years.

Mr. Doherty reviewed his experience, training and relationship with the DOR and his preparedness to perform the duties on time and in a cost-effective manner, minimizing the use of consultants.

The next interview was Jean Paul Plouffe. Mr. Plouffe reviewed his experience as the Director of Assessments and Assistant Assessor for the Town of Westford, MA. In response to a question from Chairman Feeley as to why he was interested in this job, he responded that he was maxed out in his position in Westford and that he believed he had 7 or 8 years prior to retirement and wanted to maximize his retirement/pension benefit. Mr. Plouffe reviewed his experience and training; he reported that he had a good relationship with the Department of Revenue. Mr. Plouffe also stressed his preparedness to perform the valuation work in-house and to minimize the use of outside consultants.

Mr. Plouffe informed the Board that he was a licensed appraiser and used pictometry in his work. He considered himself a "working assessor". He had some concern relative to the time between the hiring of the Director of Assessments and the need to compile the requisite sales information and data, specifically for the LA-3, and the related documentation, and felt that not all information could be compiled and submitted in time to the Department of Revenue in November, 2014 to obtain the Town's certification of values.

The Board interviewed Thaddeus J. Jankowski, Jr. Mr. Jankowski indicated that he wanted to "get back into" the assessing field because he enjoyed it. Concern was expressed by the Board members that he had virtually been out of the assessing field for a significant period of time and that he had a number of employment moves in a very short period of time. Mr. Jankowski reviewed his experience and advised the Board that he had not completed Department of Revenue forms in years and had not appeared before the Massachusetts Appellate Tax Board in years but felt that this would not have any significant impact on his being able to perform the duties of Director of Assessments for the Town.

Discussion of the Candidate

Before discussion commenced concerning the three candidates, Board member Mary Winstanley O'Connor informed the Board that she had decided, notwithstanding the fact that she had provided her Massachusetts State Ethics disclosure and had consulted with outside counsel to confirm that she did not have an ethical conflict, to recuse herself from the discussion as to the candidates and the vote for the Director of Assessments. She noted that she was counsel to Mr. Doherty and that she is a Trustee of a real estate trust.

Chairman Feeley and Mr. Greeley commenced discussion concerning the candidates. Both felt that Mr. Jankowski had been away from assessing far too long and that there was a lot

of movement in his job history. They also felt that he had been more of a manager of people and that this job was more "hands-on" work.

Chairman Feeley and Mr. Greeley discussed Mr. Plouffe and they were concerned that his interest in the job, expressed during the interview, was his desire to maximize his pension benefit upon retirement, which he estimated to be 7 or 8 years. They also expressed concern that he had experience in only one town. Further, there was concern Mr. Plouffe believed he would not have sufficient time to compile the requisite data for submission to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue to obtain the annual certification for the Town.

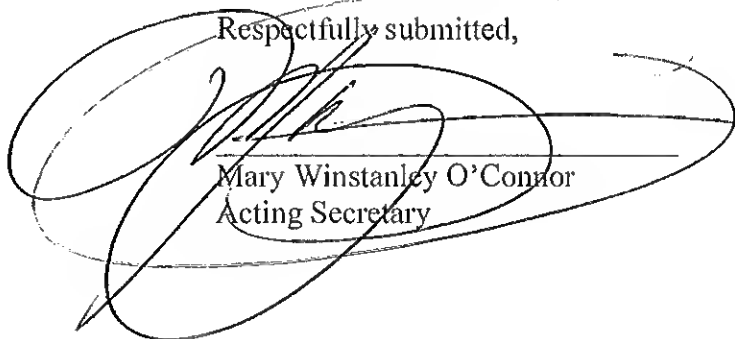
Chairman Feeley and Mr. Greeley both felt that Mr. Doherty had the most experience and was the most qualified based on his job history as Director of Assessments for several communities as well as his background with KPMG and JM Cleminshaw Company. They both felt that Mr. Doherty was the only candidate that would be able to commence the job and ensure that the Town would be in a position to obtain the annual certification of values from the Department of Revenue on a timely basis.

Mr. Greeley made a motion to end discussion concerning the three candidates which was seconded by Chairman Feeley. Both voted in favor of ending discussion. Mr. Greeley then nominated James Doherty for the position of Director of Assessments for the Town of Arlington. Chairman Feeley seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken as follows: Robert Greeley: yes, Kevin Feeley: yes, Mary Winstanley O'Connor: abstain.

A discussion then ensued as to the process for determining salary and benefits. Mary Winstanley O'Connor suggested that Chairman Feeley speak with the Human Resources Director, Caryn Cove Malloy.

A motion was made by Robert Greeley and seconded by Mary Winstanley O'Connor to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Winstanley O'Connor
Acting Secretary